

**BASE VISIT REPORT**

**Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base, Willow Grove PA.**

**05 July 2005**

**LEAD COMMISSIONER:**

Chairman Principi

**ACCOMPANYING COMMISSIONER:**

Executive Director Battaglia

**COMMISSION STAFF:**

Michael L. Delaney, Senior Analyst

**LIST OF ATTENDEES:**

RADM Stephen Turcotte	Commander, Navy Region Mid-Atlantic (CNRMA)
CAPT Harry Myers	Commanding Officer, NASJRB Willow Grove
CAPT Richard Cline	XO, NASJRB Willow Grove
COL Steven Chapman	Commander 913th AFRES
COL Col Paul Comtois	Air Operations Commander, 111th FW PA ANG
COL Mark Monroe	Commander MAG 49
LCDR Martin Schy	NASJRB Willow Grove Administration Officer
Gov. Ed Rendell	Governor of Pennsylvania (D)
Senator Arlen Specter	Senator of Pennsylvania (R)
Senator Rick Santorum	Senator of Pennsylvania (R)
Congressman Curt Weldon	Representative of Pennsylvania (R-7)
Congressman Michael Fitzpatrick	Representative of Pennsylvania (R-8)
Congresswoman Allyson Y. Schwartz	Representative of Pennsylvania (D-13)
Major General James Skiff	Deputy Adjutant General, PA Air Nat. Guard
Brig. General Jessica Wright	Adjutant General, PA Nat. Guard

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CAPT Chris Patton	CRPW
William Zobel -	CNRMA ED
Karen Matthiae	CNRMA BRAC POC
CDR Robert Powers	NASJRB XO
CDR Robert Paulson	VR-52 CO
CDR Shannon Brown	NASJRB Prospective XO (In August)
Capt. Rick Cline	Former NASJRB XO, PCO of NAS Atlanta
Ed Ebenbach	Willow Grove Chamber of Commerce
Dan McCaffery	Willow Grove Chamber of Commerce
MGEN Nelson (USMC, ret.)	Willow Grove Chamber of Commerce
Joe Spielbauer	Governor's Office
Lori Shaver	Governor's Office
Jeffrey Marrazzo	Governor's Office
Courtney Kaplan	Senator Santorum Staffer
Jeff Haberkern	Senator Santorum Staffer
Chris Bradish	Senator Spector Staffer
Bill Reynolds	Senator Spector Legal Counsel
Scott Hoefolich	Senator Spector Press Secretary
Jim Morris	Congressman Fitzpatrick Staffer
Curt Freeman	Congresswoman Schwartz Staffer
Ed Cashman	Congressman Weldon Staffer
COL Marc Ferraro	PA Army National Guard 28th Infantry Division
Col Dennis Guise (Ret)	Chief counsel for Governor Rendell
Jim Hanna	BRAC Commission
LCOL Howard Eissler	Member of 111th FW, guest of COL Comtois

Gen Lynch (Ret.)	Former member of 111th FW
LT Troy Dennison	(RADM Turcotte Aide)
Col Dods	Army reserve - Commander, 1215 Garrison Support Unit
Capt Mark Medvesky	913th Airlift Wing PAO
Mr. David Hague	BRAC Commission General Counsel
Sherri Jones	NASJRB PAO
Michelle Stotler	NASJRB PAO
COL Ferarro -	PA Army National Guard 28th Infantry Division (Striker Brigade)

### **BASE'S PRESENT MISSION:**

The mission of NAS Willow Grove is to provide, train and maintain a ready reserve force. In 1994 the base was redesignated a Joint Reserve Base to more accurately reflect our status. In addition to the Navy, the Marine Corps, Army, Air Force, and Pa National Guard reside here.

### **SECRETARY OF DEFENSE RECOMMENDATION:**

Close Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base Willow Grove, PA. Relocate all Navy and Marine Corps squadrons, their aircraft and necessary personnel, equipment and support to McGuire Air Force Base, Cookstown, NJ. Relocate the minimum amount of manpower and equipment to support intermediate maintenance workload and capacity for Tire and Wheel, non-destruction inspections, and Aviation Life Support System equipment to McGuire Air Force Base. Relocate intermediate maintenance workload and capacity for Aircraft Components, Aircraft Engines, Fabrication & Manufacturing, and Support Equipment to Fleet Readiness Center East, Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point, NC. Deactivate the 111th Fighter Wing (Air National Guard) and relocate assigned A-10 aircraft to the 124th Wing (Air National Guard), Boise Air Terminal Air Guard Station, Boise, ID (three primary aircraft authorized); 175th Wing (Air National Guard), Martin State Airport Air Guard Station, Baltimore, MD, (three primary aircraft authorized); 127th Wing (Air National Guard), Selfridge Air National Guard Base, Mount Clemens, MI (three primary aircraft authorized) and retired (six primary aircraft authorized). Relocate Armed Forces Reserve Center Expeditionary Combat Support manpower to Eglin Air Force Base, FL. Relocate Co A/228th Aviation to Fort Dix, Trenton, NJ. Relocate Reserve Intelligence Area 16 to Fort Dix. Establish an enclave for the Army Reserve units remaining on or relocating to Willow Grove and the Air National Guard 270th Engineering Installation Squadron. Realign Cambria Regional Airport, Johnstown, PA, by relocating Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 775 Detachment A, to include all required personnel, equipment, and support, to McGuire Air Force Base.

## **SECRETARY OF DEFENSE JUSTIFICATION:**

This recommendation will reduce excess capacity while creating new joint opportunities in the McGuire Air Force Base/Fort Dix/Naval Aviation Engineering Station Lakehurst military concentration area. This recommendation leverages maintenance and operational efficiencies within Marine Corps Reserve Aviation and maintains reserve forces in areas with favorable demographics. Inclusion of the realignment of Cambria Regional Airport in this recommendation allows the assets currently housed there to be collocated with their headquarters at McGuire Air Force Base. The major intermediate maintenance functions are consolidated into a Fleet Readiness Center, which reduces the number of maintenance levels and streamlines the way maintenance is accomplished with associated significant cost reductions.

This recommendation enables Air Force Future Total Force transformation by consolidating the A-10 fleet at installations of higher military value, and contributes to Army's establishment of the Northeast Army Reserve Regional Readiness Command.

The USAF KC-135E model aircraft (16 primary aircraft authorized) at McGuire Air Force Base, NJ, retire. The capacity created by the Air Force force structure retirement of KC-135Es (16 primary aircraft authorized) from McGuire Air Force Base enables the execution of this recommendation.

## **MAIN FACILITIES REVIEWED:**

None: Wind shield tour cancelled because of lack of time.

## **KEY ISSUES IDENTIFIED**

Since the release of the 2005 BRAC Report, has there been any new information regarding the Reserve Components that would negatively impact the overall DoD mission?

Some smaller units were not specifically identified in the DoD closure recommendation. How will you address these units?

Since the release of the 2005 BRAC Report, have you identified any significant discrepancies in the COBRA data that would modify the DoD recommendations?

How does closing a fully functioning Joint base support the DoD objective of increasing Joint operability?

The DoD recommendation states that all Navy and Marine Corps squadrons, aircraft and necessary personnel will relocate to McGuire AFB and the retirement of 16 KC-135Es located at McGuire enables execution of this move. However, there is a COBRA line item identified as MilCon for McGuire AFB of \$65,757,172. Elsewhere in the COBRA data, it states that there is space for the Navy to move to McGuire. Is the MilCon for the transfer of the Navy units to McGuire?

If the Air National Guard portion is reversed, what will be the impact to Willow Grove Air Base?

## **INSTALLATION CONCERNS RAISED**

1. It appears that DoD believes the 913AW (Air Force Reserve Command) property is actually owned by the Navy as indicated by the following:
  - a. Information contained in the DOD BRAC web site under the Air Force service link states that Willow Grove ARS falls under the "parent" recommendation of the Department of the Navy.
  - b. Willow Grove ARS, being an organization separate from the Navy, was not contacted by the BRAC Commission
  - c. The 913AW and the 111FW do not have a military value assigned
2. The numbers of personnel in the BRAC report reflect Willow Grove JRB losing 865 military and 362 civilian positions. The 913AW has approximately 220 Air Reserve Technicians, 106 civilians, approximately 1104 traditional reserve positions and 5 AGRs. The 111th FW has 205 Air Reserve Technicians, 69 AGRs and 745 traditional guardsmen. The numbers reflected in the report don't add up.
3. The 913AW is not identified in any DoD documentation, or in the Federal Registry as an entity formally recommended for realignment or closure.
4. There is conflicting location data between Air Force and DoD reports of personnel moving from Willow Grove ARS to Eglin.
5. It appears the DoN made the decision to close NAS Willow Grove and thus the rest of the BRAC decision fell into place with no regard to the base as a Joint Base.

## **COMMUNITY CONCERNS RAISED:**

A review of community attributes indicates no issues regarding the ability of the infrastructure of the communities to support missions, forces, and personnel. There are no known community infrastructure impediments to implementation of all recommendations affecting the installations in this recommendation.

## **REQUESTS FOR STAFF AS A RESULT OF VISIT:**